

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, EEC

SUBJECT: CHRISTIAN UNION AFFILIATION WITH ETUC STILL PENDING

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REF: EC BRUSSELS 6072

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. ON NOVEMBER 6 LEADERS OF THE EUROPEAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ETUC) AND THE EUROPEAN ORGANIZATION OF THE WORLD CONFEDERATION OF LABOR (EO/WCL) MET TO DISCUSS TERMS OF AFFILIATION WITH THE ETUC FOR SEVEN EO/WCL UNIONS. THE MEETING WAS COMPLICATED BY A BELGIAN FGTB EFFORT TO LINK THE EO/WCL'S BID FOR AFFILIATION WITH THE ITALIAN CGIL'S REQUEST FOR ETUC MEMBERSHIP. REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GERMAN DGB AND THE FRENCH FO STRONGLY OPPOSED CGIL ADMISSION. A FINAL DETERMINATION IS EXPECTED TO BE MADE AT AN ETUC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING ON NOVEMBER 24. END SUMMARY.

2. ETUC AND EO/WCL LEADERS NOW APPEAR CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR THE LONG ANTICIPATED AFFILIATION OF EO/WCL UNIONS WITH THE ETUC. THEY ALSO SEEM RELUCTANT TO DISCUSS DETAILS OF THEIR NOVEMBER 6 MEETING BUT INFORMED SOURCES IN INTERNATIONAL LABOR CIRCLES HAVE DESCRIBED THE MEETING AS HIGHLY CONTROVERSIAL WITH THE QUESTION OF AFFILIATION STILL UNRESOLVED.

3. THESE SOURCES CLAIM THAT THE INTRODUCTION OF THE CGIL ISSUE HAS CAUSED CONSIDERABLE RETHINKING ON THE PART OF SOME ETUC LEADERS ON THE LONG RANGE EFFECTS OF THE EO/WCL AFFILIATION. THEY FEAR EO/WCL AFFILIATION, EVEN IF NOT LINKED TO THE CGIL'S ENTRY AT THIS TIME, WILL EVENTUALLY PAVE THE WAY FOR CGIL AND FRENCH CGT AFFILIATION WITH THE ETUC WHICH WOULD GIVE THE COMMUNISTS A SIGNIFICANT FOOTHOLD IN THE EUROPEAN DEMOCRATIC LABOR MOVEMENT. A SECONDARY BUT NONETHELESS SERIOUS RESERVATION WOULD ALSO BE THE INEVITABLE EROSION OF THE ICFTU'S INFLUENCE IN EUROPE IN THE FACE OF AN ENLARGED AND CONSIDERABLY STRENGTHENED ETUC.

4. STRONG DGB AND FRENCH FO OPPOSITION COULD BLOCK CGIL MEMBERSHIP IN THE ETUC. MOST OBSERVERS HOWEVER, STILL BELIEVE THAT EO/WCL AFFILIATION IS NOW ONLY A QUESTION OF TIME AND MAY BE DECIDED AT THE NOVEMBER 24 ETUC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING. THIS MEETING FOLLOWS THE NOVEMBER 21-23 ICFTU EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING WHERE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE AFFILIATION QUESTION WILL ALSO UNDOUBTEDLY BE DISCUSSED.

5. THE FGTB MOVE TO LINK THE CGIL AFFILIATION TO THAT OF THE EO/WCL IS GENERALLY CONSIDERED AN FGTB EFFORT TO EXCLUDE THE BELGIAN CONFEDERATION OF CHRISTIAN TRADE UNIONS (CSC) FROM ETUC MEMBERSHIP. WHILE THE FGTB PROPOSITION HAS SUPPORT FROM ITALY'S CISL IT IS NOT

ACCORDED MUCH CHANCE FOR SUCCESS.

6. ANOTHER OBSTACLE TO THE EO/WCL AFFILIATION WITH THE ETUC HAS BEEN THE QUESTION OF WHICH POSITIONS IN THE ETUC SECRETARIAT SHOULD BE ALLOTTED TO EO/WCL LEADERS AFTER AFFILIATION HAS BEEN ACHIEVED. THIS PROBLEM HAS DIMINISHED SOMEWHAT WITH THE YET TO BE ANNOUNCED DECISION THAT ETUC ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY KAARE SANDEGREN WILL RESIGN IN MID-DECEMBER IN ORDER TO RETURN TO THE NORWEGIAN LO WHERE HE WILL ASSUME AN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS POST. EO/WCL GENERAL SECRETARY JEAN KULAKOWSKI IS ALREADY BEING MENTIONED AS ANDEGREN'S SUCCESSOR WHEN AND IF EO/WCL AFFILIATION WITH THE ETUC BECOMES REALITY. GREENWALD

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